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#### General Law Committee Testimony

By Stan Sorkin, President

Connecticut Food Association

February 25, 2010

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT of RB 5223. AN ACT CONCERNING RETAIL THEFT. Good afternoon, Chairman Colapietro, Chairman Shapiro and Members of the General Law Committee. My name is Stan Sorkin, President of the Connecticut Food Association. Our Association provides policy advice, research, legislative and regulatory services to the grocery industry in the state. Our membership ranges from single store independent operators to large chain stores.

Regardless of the size of the store, organized retail theft is a growing and is a major concern of the grocery industry. The incidents of theft of high value items such as baby formula and cigarettes are well documented. The industry invests heavily in security systems and personnel to prevent occurrences and apprehend the individuals who perpetrate these crimes. Obviously, the loss of high value merchandise has a negative effect on a store's profitability. This bill recognizes the seriousness of the issue and the need to combat organized retail theft.

The Connecticut Food Association is in full agreement of the language of RB 5223 which establishes the definition of organized retail theft, identifies the roles of the individuals initiating the theft, defines the characteristics of accessories to organize retail theft, and classifies organize retail theft as a Class C or D felony. The CFA agrees that RB 5223 will achieve its stated purpose and reduce the incidence of organized retail theft.

On behalf of the Connecticut Food association and its member companies, I urge you to vote YES on RB 5223.